

TO THE  
**BISHOPS**  
AND THEIR  
**MINISTERS,**  
OR

Any of them, to whom this shall Come:  
Something by way of **Q U E R Y**, which  
they are desired to Answer in Plain-  
ness And according to the  
Scriptures of Truth.

---

*He that entereth not by the Door into the Sheepfold, but climbeth up some  
other way, the same is a Thief and a Robber, John 10. 1.*

---

*Let no man deceive you with vain words, but prove what is acceptable unto  
the Lord : And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of  
darkness, but rather reprove them, Ephes. 5.*

---

Printed in the Year, 1671.

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY  
FROM THE  
ANDREW PRESTON PEARODY  
FUND

*March 10, 1952*

T O T H E  
 Bishops and their Ministers,  
 O R  
 Any of them, to whom this  
 shall come, &c.

**T**HIS is a Visitation unto unto you all, that you may consider what you are a doing, for the Lord God sees all the actions of men, and all must come to judgement, and every man must receive according to his doings; and every one that is a Persecutor, or envious, or a despiser of them that desire to live in the fear of God, who for Conscience sake to God, cannot conform to the Wills, Customs, and vain Traditions of men, I say unto you that are Persecutors of such, or do cause such to be persecuted, you must expect your reward from God, according to your doings; for God, in all Ages hath abhorred such, and when they have done their Work, he hath rendered unto them their Wages, and brought on them Judgments, and Plagues, and none of them could escape his stroke, when he arose to plead the Cause of the Oppressed, and to render vengeance upon their Oppressors: And the Lord is the same at this day, as in days of old, his eye beholds the evill and the good; and he is a rewarder of all according to their workes and their doings, for he doth hear the Cry of the Oppressed, and will not at all acquit the wicked, except they repent, and turn at his reproof, and meet him by true repentance, which is to put away the evill of their doings by fearing to do evill and learning to do well; and to study how to please God, and not to devise Mischief against the Innocent, as many do at

this day and are pulling and haleing their Goods from them, and casting them in Prisons and Holes, and Excommunicating them that were never of their Church which was never the practice of the true Christian People or Ministers; neither do we read that *Timothy* or *Titus* were ever called *Lord Bishops*, or had such Typpits, and Hoods, and white Sleeves and Surplices, as the Bishops and their Ministers, have at this day, for the white linnen wherewith the saints were arrayed, was *Righteousness* they were adorned with a meek and a quiet spirit, which was, and is, with the Lord of great price. Neither did they sue men at the Law for Tythes, and cast them in Prisons and Holes, as those called Ministers do at this day, who would force people, to give them maintenance and wages when they do no work for them, and to pay for their Bread and Wine, when they neither eat nor drink of it; and if they will not pay them their demands, they sometimes take three or four times as much as they at first demanded; and sometimes as much or more then a mans estate is worth by the year, *Oh Abominable wickedness!* Do those that are found in these things think that the Lord takes no notice of it, or that his eye sees not? Yes, yes, the Lord sees all these cruelties and will not at all acquit the actors thereof in that day that he comes to plead with all flesh. Therefore consider what you are doing, you that are found in those things; do not think to escape the hand of the Lord, for *God is no respecter of persons*; but, as is said, *will render to every man according to his doings*; and in that day, none can hide themselves or save themselves from his stroke, though they may call to the Hills to cover them, or to the Mountaines to hide them; yea, though they fly into the clefts of the Rocks, his hand will find them, for none can hide when he appears in his Judgments.

Therefore all consider while you have a day and a time, for how great soever you are, or how ever you may vaunt your selves over the Innocent People of God, who desire to live in his fear, and to wait upon him, and to Worship him as he requires, I say, however you may vaunt over such, and oppress, persecute, and seek to suppress such, yet your breath is in your nostrills, and the Lord is the giver of it, and he may take it at his pleasure, for he gave unto man Life and Breath, that man might live unto him, and fear to offend him, and made man to serve him, and to wait upon him, and to worship him in spirit and truth as he requires; and this spiritual worship

Worship which God is worshiped in, is and ever was, a Mystery to all Persecuters and Despisers, and to all that preach for hire, and Divine for money for the Ministers of the spirit and those that spake, the word of the Lord, testified against such that spake, and the Lord had not spoken unto them, and such did not profit the People at all; and men by wisdom which is earthly, and sensual, know not God, but if ever men come to know the Lord, to their comfort and salvation, they must learn of Christ the Light, and Life of men; who said, *I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your soules*, and hath said, *He that will be my disciple must deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me, who am the way to the Father*. And hath said, *I am the Light of the world*. Therefore have a care how ye resist, mock, scoff, and deride this Light which lighteth every man; and shewes them there evill deeds and reproves in secret, and shewes them what they should do, and what they should not do; which teaches and shewes that they should do to others, as they would others should do to them.

Now all you Bishops and Ministers, so called, consider whether you are followers of Christ, as they were who bid People follow them as they follow Christ, or, on the contrary, are in the steps of those that persecuted Christ Members, and cryed *peace, peace*, to people, *while they put into their mouthes*; but, if they put not into their mouthes, *they prepared war against them*; and such the true Prophets and Ministers *who spake as the Spirit of the Lord gave them utterance* and as he required, testified against. Now it is my desire that you may truly weigh and consider these things, and examine your own hearts in the coole, quiet, peaceable harmless Spirit, which envyes not, and in the meek spirit. And every one of you that doth so, may find I am your Friend, and one that desires men might repent, and come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved; with out which all men are miserable, whatever they profess, or pofess, in this world.

Now I have thus far, cleared my conscience to you, in uprightness of heart, according to Truth, which God hath manifested in me, to shew and discover, that which is contrary to himself, and to lead into that which is right in his sight, and to Worship him as he requires, and gives the knowlege of himself, and leads and brings to the peace, which passeth the understanding of men, and is more to be prized then all the world; I say in this Truth and Light which

which God hath given, to reprove the world of their sins and to lead and guide men unto himself and keep them in peace and Covenant with him for ever, and gives to know the tongue of the learned and the Word, which was in the beginning, from which, and in which, the words of Truth were spoken, which was before the false prophets, and hirelings were, and will be when they are all gone ; I say in this Truth, which God is more and more manifesting in the hearts of his people, who in uprightness do wait upon him ; I evermore desire to rest and abide.

*The 19th. of the  
8th. Month,  
1 6 7 1.*

*Leonard Coale.*

---

Something by way of

# Q U E R Y

TO THE

BISHOPS and MINISTERS, of the  
Church of *England*, which they are de-  
sired to Answer in Plainness, and  
according to the Scriptures  
of Truth.

**F**riends, seeing you profess your selves to be Teachers and Instructors of others, and Pastors, and Ministers, and Gifted men ; these things are propounded to you as followeth.

That seeing the Scripture saith, *John 17. 3. And this is Life Eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Hence I Query.

*Query*

( 7 )  
*Query I.*

What is it that gives the true and saving knowledge of God, which is Life Eternal? Is it *within* man or *without* him?

*Query II.*

Is it possible to attain to such a saving knowledge of the invincible God, as to know and witness Life Eternal to the Soul that hath been in Death, I say is such a knowledge of the Love of God that made Heaven and Earth, attained to now by any in this Life, that is under your Ministry, yea or nay?

*Query III.*

Is it sufficient to read that there is a God, and that he sent Jesus Christ into the world; and to believe so from the Testimony given of him without, and left upon Record, *That he made the World and all things therein, &c.* May not a man have such a knowledge as this, and yet not know Life Eternal to his soul, yea, or nay?

*Query IV.*

And seeing the holy Scripture saith, *That all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* And that, *Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* What is this New Birth? And how can a man that is *dead in trespasses and sins be born again*, and come to know Life Eternal?

*Query V.*

Is Christ the true Light *that Lighteth every man into the world* yea, or nay?

*Query VI.*

What was that Comforter which Christ promised to send to his Disciples, which should lead them into all Truth; which should reprove the World of sin, &c. Is this Comforter come already, or is he yet to come? Are any led into Truth but by the Comforter which Christ promised to send after his departure: yea or nay?

*Query VII.*

What is that which shews men their sin, and reproveth in secret for evil, when no man seeth it?

*Query VIII.*

And is that which shews men thus their sinful state and reproveth for evil, sufficient (in it self) to lead out of sin and out of evil, into holiness and purity (if they obey and follow its guidance) yea or nay?

*Query*

*Query IX.*

Can any man in this Life, on this side the Grave, attain to such a state, as to be made free from sin, and know and witness, preservation out of Transgression, by the heavenly Power and Spirit of God, unto his heavenly kingdom, into which, *no unclean thing can enter*, yea or nay ?

*Query X.*

What is the First Principle of pure Religion ?

*Query XI.*

What is the Gospel, and what was the end for which it was preached ? Are any true Preachers of the Gospel but such as the Lord God sends forth and Ordaines ?

*Query XII.*

Whether or no, the Ministers which were sent forth by Christ Jesus in the Gospel dispensation, did ever take Tythes ? and if people would not give it, to sue them at Law for Tythes, and take it by force ( yea sometimes ten times as much as the single value of Tythes demanded ) and go to a Parish and make a bargain for so much a year, or demand so much, and if the People think it too much, and will not give it, go to another place, where they can have most Tythes, Easter-reckoning, and Midsomer-Dues, &c. by the year ? I say Did the Ministers of Christ after this manner ? Or rather,

*Query XIII.*

Did not the Ministers of Christ preach freely, even according as Christ commanded them, who said, *Freely ye have received, freely give* ?

*Query XIII.*

What, and where is the Church, which Christ himself is the Head of, *Elect and Precious* ? And hath he such a Church visible upon Earth, yea or nay ?

*Query XV.*

Can a man be a true living Member of the true Church, unless he  
be



be redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ from sin and unrighteousness, yea or nay ?

*Query XVI.*

Will you, or any of you affirm and prove by the Holy Scriptures, that your Church, and way of Worship and Practice, is agreeable with, and according to the practice and example of the Primitive Church in the Apostles dayes ?

*Query XVII.*

What is it to be a Member of your Church ? May a man thereby obtain Eternal Life and Salvation to his Immortal Soul, and have an assurance of the Love and Favour of God, and of an Inheritance that fadeth not away, when this World shall be no more, Or rather, are not you such as say, *Its impossible to live without sinning ; you cannot be perfect in this Life, but carry about a body of sin while you are here, and have no assurance, but are dead in trespasses and sins, have erred and strayed from the wayes of God, and are miserable sinners,* as you say your selves in the *Common Prayer,* ( Oh that you did but say it in a true sence of your condition, and knew a true repentance, which is a real change of the heart and mind, and forsaking of Sin, as it is written ; *Put away the evil of your doings, saith the Lord, and I will receive you. Wash you, make you clean, and then come and let us reason together, &c.* then would you joyn with us. ) But alas are not many Members of your Church, and yet live in uncleanness, drunkenness, whoredom, &c. who are not Excommunicated. But if any come to be turned from an evil Conversation, to walk in righteousness and holiness, and to learn the fear of the Lord, which is to depart from evil ; then presently such a man or woman, you say, is deceived or deluded ; and by departing from evil become a prey to the ungodly, and is hated, reviled, mocked and excommunicated out of your Church, ( when it may be they were never of it ) and inprisoned, ( and as it were buried alive ) because they do not come to your Worship and conform to you in those things which they are truly perswaded against ( and that by the Spirit of God ) And then again, if any such that hath thus for a time been separated from you, and walked in Righteousness and Truth, and it may be suffered much by you for the

same ; I say, if such a one turn again ( like the Dog to the vomit, and as the Sow that was washed to wallow in the mire ) from the grace of God into unrighteousness and filthyness and do that which is evil : then such thereby become again fit Members of your Church, and are received in amongst you as good converts again, and do enjoy their Liberty as before ; all which makes many moderate People greatly to question and suspect, that your Church and way of Worship ; is not the true Church Worship ; and therefore do absent from it ?

*Query XVIII.*

And can you blame any for absenting from you ? Or is it reasonable for you to force and compel People to be of your Church, who confess you are miserable sinners, that have erred and strayed, from the ways of God ? ( as indeed we believe you are ) Do you think that outward force is the way to bring People ( that are sincere ) to be of your Church, which daily err and stray from the way of God ? Or rather,

*Query XIX.*

Would it not be more Christian like, for you to let others alone in matters appertaining to God, his Worship, and Religion, so long as they walk innocently towards all men ? And must all render an account to God of all their deeds, and receive a just reward according to their doings ; for he is no respecter of persons. I say, were it not better for you, who say, You are *Gifted men*, or *Spiritual men*, to use only the Spiritual Weapon ( if you had it ? ) to convince gain-sayers with all ; and by your lives, and good conversations to Preach forth to all, That you are indeed the Embassadors of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit ?

*Query XX.*

What are the fruits and markes of a true Christian ?

*Query XXI.*

And what are the fruits, and markes of a false Prophet, by which

which People may know and distinguish them from the true ?

*Query XXII.*

Why did *Cain* Kill his Brother *Abell* ? Did he well in so doing, yea or nay ?

*Query XXII.*

Is Persecution of Christ, or of Antichrist ? Who was the first Persecutor about Worship ?

*Query XXIII.*

What will be the portion of those that cause the blind to wander out of the right way and are not you such, yea or nay ?

Answer these things in meekness and moderation according to Scripture. That if you are really and truly of those that seek the Exaltation of Truth and Holyness it may be manifest : but if you seek not this, but your selves, and are such as God never sent ; then know assuredly that the Lord God of Heaven, who beholds your actions, and from whom you cannot hide your selves, will discover you more and more, and your nakedness and shame shall yet more and more appear in the sight of Nations ; and he will give you the Cup of his dreadful Vengeance and Indignation to Drink, as a just reward of your doings if you repent not.

This is from one that from a Child hath desired and truly longed after the saving knowledge of God, and his way in which I might find Life and Peace to my Soul, being now in Bonds with many more for Obeying and Keeping the Commands of Christ Jesus

*Reading Goals the*  
*8th. Month,*  
*1 6 7 1.*

*Benjamin Coale.*